

former president told me. "The Reagans of Illinois had little in material terms, but we were emotionally healthy."

The Rev. Billy Graham describes Ronald Reagan as a man of compassion and devotion, a president whom America will remember with pride. "He is one of the cleanest, most moral and spiritual men I know," Mr. Graham told me. "In the scores of times we were together, he has always wanted to talk about spiritual things."

On many occasions over the past 21 years, Mr. Reagan shared with me his philosophies and his views on politics, foreign affairs, religion and human nature. "I believe that each person is innately good," he observed. "But those who act immorally do so because they allow greed and ambition to overtake their basic goodness."

These beliefs, while the source of many of his greatest triumphs, also set the stage for some of his disappointments. One regret was that he did not demand greater accountability from his staff—"especially those who abused their power with arrogance." He acknowledged that the tendency not to fire anyone had serious ramifications. "For instance, any errors in our dialogues with Iran resulted because some of my subordinates exceeded their instructions without reporting back to me," he stressed. "When I read the Tower Commission Report, it looked as if some staff members had taken off on their own."

Another issue that troubled him was the public perception that he was prejudiced against minority groups and not concerned about the poor. He maintains that he had fought for legislation that would make welfare programs more effective. "My economic program was based on encouraging businessmen to create more jobs and to better the conditions of their employees," he noted. "I think I succeeded."

On the day before his presidency ended, Mr. Reagan granted me his last interview in the Oval Office. He told me that the saddest day of his eight-year tenure was on Oct. 23, 1983, when 241 U.S. servicemen died in a terrorist bombing in Beirut, Lebanon. "To save our men from being killed by sniper from private armies that were causing trouble in Lebanon, it was decided to shelter them in a concrete-reinforced building," he recalled. "But no one foresaw that a suicide driver with a truck load of explosives would drive into the building and blow it up."

At the close of that Oval Office interview, I asked him to describe his presidency in one line. "We won the Cold War," he said without hesitation. "That phrase didn't originate with me, but I'll settle for it. What counts is that there is an end to the Cold War, and I now feel justified in my theme of 'Peace Through Strength.'"

Former President George Bush adds: "Ronald Reagan's foresight put us in a position to change our relationship with the Soviet Union and to make it possible for the changes that took place in Eastern Europe. And he certainly helped bring democracy to our hemisphere."

Mr. Bush, having worked closely with Mr. Reagan as his vice president, also told me: "True, he was a man of principle on the issues. But, even more than that, the American people loved him for his genuine decency, his unfailing kindness and his great sense of humor. He is a true believer in the goodness of America."

THE FINEST GIFT

Edwin Meese III, former attorney general, notes that Mr. Reagan's legacy to America continues to this day. "Many are calling the congressional leadership's agenda the Second Reagan Revolution," he says. "More importantly, Mr. Reagan continues to inspire Americans of all ages to value the patriotism and leadership which he so splendidly demonstrated."

Longtime Reagan aide Lyn Nofziger concurs, adding: History will surely record that the finest birthday gift already given to Mr. Reagan by Americans is a Republican House and Senate that are determined to carry on the Reagan Revolution."

Yet Mr. Reagan says that the best birthday gift for him this year would be that scientists receive the support they need to fund a treatment and a cure for Alzheimer's so that others will be spared the anguish that the illness causes.

Ever the altruist, Ronald Reagan—even for his birthday wish—places the welfare of others above his own. It is a characteristic that has served him faithfully until now, and is one that will sustain him on his "journey into the sunset" of his life.●

WARD VALLEY

● Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, the Senator from Alaska, the chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, spoke on the floor earlier today in favor of S. 1596, which would transfer federally owned land in Ward Valley, CA, to the State of California for the purpose of building a low-level radioactive waste dump. I want to set the record straight and briefly explain why S. 1596 is not in the best interest of the people my State of California.

I am opposed to S. 1596 because it circumvents the efforts of many Californians and the administration to put

safety first and to ensure the safety of the drinking water supply of over 12 million California citizens.

S. 1596 amounts to an unconditional transfer of Federal land in violation of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 which requires the Secretary of Interior to include "such terms, covenants, conditions and reservations as he deems necessary to ensure * * * protection of the public interest."

In May 1995 the administration announced its commitment to transfer the Federal land to the State subject to receiving a binding commitment from the State of California that the additional safeguards recommended by a National Academy of Sciences panel be carried out; that the total volume and radioactivity of the material to be disposed of at the site would be limited to the amounts currently specified in the State license for the facility, and that there be a specific limit on plutonium deposited at Ward Valley. The State refused to enter into any kind of enforceable agreement.

Lack of cooperation from the State and the discovery of evidence that may indicate radioactive leakage to groundwater at a site of similar characteristics in Beatty, NV, led the administration to announce in February 1996 that it will carry out a supplemental environmental impact statement and perform key safety tests at the Ward Valley site before proceeding with the transfer.

The bill transfers the land for a payment of \$500,100, and a nonbinding, nonenforceable letter from Governor Wilson to the Chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that the State will "carry out environmental monitoring and protection measures based on recommendations of the National Academy of Sciences."

The bill is another end-run at a process that needs to put the health and safety of California citizens first. It undermines the safety first approach that we have been pursuing together with the administration.●

FOREIGN CURRENCY REPORTS

In accordance with the appropriate provisions of law, the Secretary of the Senate herewith submits the following report(s) of standing committees of the Senate, certain joint committees of the Congress, delegations and groups, and select and special committees of the Senate, relating to expenses incurred in the performance of authorized foreign travel:

CONSOLIDATED REPORT OF EXPENDITURE OF FOREIGN CURRENCIES AND APPROPRIATED FUNDS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL BY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE U.S. SENATE, UNDER AUTHORITY OF SEC. 22, P.L. 95-384—22 U.S.C. 1754(b), COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, FOR TRAVEL FROM OCT. 1 TO DEC. 31, 1995

Name and country	Name of currency	Per diem		Transportation		Miscellaneous		Total	
		Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency	Foreign currency	U.S. dollar equivalent or U.S. currency
Senator Connie Mack:									
Ireland	Dollar		62.00						62.00
Total			62.00						62.00

MARK O. HATFIELD,
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations, Apr. 17, 1996.